

2011 AUSTRALIAN
SAFER COMMUNITY AWARDS
National Awards





The former Commonwealth Attorney-General, Robert McClelland congratulated the winners of the 12th Annual Australian Safer Communities Awards for their contribution to emergency management and disaster resilience.

Mr McClelland said there were fourteen winning projects from categories including emergency management agencies, local government, and education, training and research.

"I am pleased to see strong emphasis on community resilience in this year's entries," Mr McClelland said.

"This reflects an increased awareness of the need to be better prepared for emergencies and disasters such as those we have seen across Australia in the past 12 months.

"It also fits well with the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience, the blueprint for the nation to work together to build disaster resilience in our communities."

Mr McClelland said that several winning projects focused on using information technology and new media to warn and inform people about natural hazards.

"The Queensland Police Service won for its ground breaking use of Facebook to provide quick and accurate information during the Queensland floods," Mr McClelland said.

"Surf Life Saving Australia was highly commended for its BeachSafe website and smartphone app which gives beach goers current conditions and patrol information for beaches across Australia," Mr McClelland said.

Another winning project that received special recognition was in the youth category, where pupils at Lara Primary School in Victoria made their own fire awareness education video.

Of the 100 projects entered nationally this year, 26 made it to the final judging for category winners and high commendation.

To find out more, read the 2011 Australian Safer Communities Awards booklet located on the emergency management in Australia website at www.em.gov.au. If you would like to receive a copy please write to empublications@dag.gov.au

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Local Government

Winner

Circular Head Council

The "Look out for your mates" – Mayor's Road Safety challenge is encouraging people to look after their mates by discouraging risky behaviour on our roads, for example, not letting them drive if they have been drinking in an effort to keep them safe. The campaign is essentially a peer education program, working with the assumption that messages delivered by one's 'mates' may be more powerful and more readily received than those delivered by law enforcement bodies. On the Same Wave provides Queenslanders from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds with potentially life saving surf safety education in their primary language.

LtoR: Hon Robert McClelland MP, Deb Mainwaring and Mayor Daryl Quilliam - Mayor's Road Safety Challenge



Highly Commended

Hinchinbrook Shire Council

In February 2009, Hinchinbrook Shire suffered its worst flood event in over 15 years. The Local Area Warden System was developed in response to this event.

The Council established a system of nineteen wardens' localities and appointed and trained 26 wardens and deputy wardens.

LtoR: Hon Robert McClelland MP, Councillor Pino Giandomenico and Robert Clark - Local Area Warden System



Awards

Volunteer/Community Group

Winner

NSW State Emergency Service

The Tweed Shire Aged & Disabled FloodSafe Guide is the first FloodSafe Guide developed by the SES to be locally driven and specific to the needs of the aged and disabled in NSW. The SES, in conjunction with established community networks, adopted innovative approaches to capture the interest and engage with the target audience in their own environment.

The project aims to respond to the identified needs within the community and adapt SES information to meet these needs.



LtoR: Hon Robert McClelland MP, Brian Sheehan and Simon Gregg - Aged and Disabled FloodSafe Guide

Highly Commended

Surf Living Saving Queensland

Surf Life Saving Queensland has been working in partnership with the Queensland Government to help reduce beach fatalities and injuries among the state's growing migrant and refugee population.

On the Same Wave provides Queenslanders from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds with potentially life saving surf safety education in their primary language.



LtoR: Hon Robert McClelland MP, John Brennan and Scott Harrison - On the Same Wave Multicultural Program

Youth

Winner

Lara Primary School

2009 was the 40th anniversary of the Lara bushfires. The 2009 Black Saturday bushfires resulted in some students feeling helpless and afraid of fire.

The educational movie Fire – Friend or Foe was made by the students with the express purpose of increasing other children's understanding and awareness of fire.



LtoR: Hon Robert McClelland MP, Darby Teesdale, Serena Gravett, Ros Heywood, Brooke Harris, and Marcia O'Brien - Fire: Friend or Foe

National

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Nationally Significant

Winner

SES Agencies and Australasian Fire & Emergency Service Authorities Council

The SES Children's Natural Hazards Awareness and Education Program helps children to better understand storms, cyclones, floods and tsunami through short, entertaining safety stories. It encourages children aged 5-12 years and their families to increase their preparedness for natural hazard events.

LtoR: Hon Robert McClelland MP, Amanda Leck and Andrew Gissing – SES Children's Natural Hazards Awareness & Education Program



Highly Commended

Surf Life Saving Australia

Beachsafe was developed to harness and capitalise on the wealth of data collected and managed by Surf Life Saving Australia covering all aspects of beach and water safety.

This wealth of information is presented in an easy-to-read, informative and educational manner that will help educate and keep safe the community using a popular website, a smartphone version and an iPhone application.

LtoR: Hon Robert McClelland MP, Travis Klerck and Gary Daly – Beachsafe



Winner

Red Cross

Communicating in Recovery was developed in direct response to concerns identified by community members following the 2009 Black Saturday bushfires.

It is a guide for people or organisations working and managing information in a post emergency environment. This resource outlines the basic principles of recovery and communication in recovery, includes information about the strengths and weaknesses of different forms of communication and looks at how to tailor communications for different groups in the community. It also includes information about working with the media.

LtoR: Hon Robert McClelland MP, Angela Sutherland and Lauren Gould – Communicating in Recovery (Note: originally entered in Education, Training and Research)



Awards

State and Territory

Winner

Queensland Police Service

The Queensland Police Service trialled a social media strategy in mid 2010. This social media strategy enabled them to engage with and inform the broader Queensland community throughout the natural disasters of late 2010 and early 2011.

Disseminating crucial public safety announcements and community engagement issues to those without electricity or internet connection proved extremely powerful.



LtoR: Hon Robert McClelland MP, Kym Charlton and Matthew Rigby – Social Media for emergency and disaster management

Highly Commended

ACT Community Services Directorate

This project was intended to improve the resilience of the more at risk members of the community by encouraging them to prepare an emergency plan, connect with their neighbours, engage with community sector case workers by consolidating a range of emergency preparedness messages into one easy to read and access document.



LtoR: Hon Robert McClelland MP, Kerry Webb and Mark Robertson – Emergency Preparedness Kit

Highly Commended

Northern Territory Police, Fire & Emergency Services

The Northern Territory Emergency Services and the Bureau of Meteorology developed new tropical cyclone advice. All talking posters deliver this cyclone advice at the touch of a button, in indigenous language, specific to the top end community.



LtoR: Hon Robert McClelland MP, Kerri McMahon – Fire and Emergency Services

Highly Commended

SA Country Fire Service

Acknowledging and understanding how women make decisions in critical times must help shape future bushfire education programs. Scant attention is paid to women and their roles in the emergency management landscape. This is particularly relevant in the field of bushfire preparedness and mitigation. Research undertaken in South Australia and parts of Victoria revealed the absence of those with fire fighting skills (generally men) from the home at the time of a fire. Women were often left not knowing what to do or how to operate equipment. Women were consulted to find out what they wanted from an education program and to determine knowledge and skills gaps. This was used to design and deliver pilot workshops. Feedback from the pilot workshops was subsequently used to inform the state wide program that has continued to improve.



LtoR: Hon Robert McClelland MP, Fiona Dunstan and Keren Sutton – Firey Women Program

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Education, Training and research

Winner

NSW Rural Fire Service

The Hotspots Fire Project is a training program which provides landholders and land managers with the skills and knowledge to actively and collectively participate in fire management ensuring healthy productive landscapes in which risk is managed, communities are safe and biodiversity is managed.

The program is adapted to suit each community and their specific requirements and objectives.

LtoR: Hon Robert McClelland MP, Lana Andrews and Dr Simon Heemstra – Hotspots Fire project



Highly Commended

Surf life Saving Western Australia

E-Learning for the Front Line Livesaver is a flexible self paced learning package which has revolutionised the way front line lifesavers are trained.

It is centred around a virtual beach and life saving clubrooms staffed by typical volunteer based characters performing the key tasks associated with the operation of a Surf Life Saving Club.

LtoR: Hon Robert McClelland MP, and Paul Andrew – E Learning for Front Line Lifesavers (Note: originally entered in Volunteer/community category)





Elissa Jackson, Principal of Lara Primary School.

Elissa Jackson's acceptance speech on behalf of all award recipients

"In Australia we are indeed fortunate to have the significant contribution of volunteer efforts within the emergency management sector. On a personal level, our school worked closely with our local CFA to build student and family understandings, including the production of our short film, Fire: Friend or Foe. The time, commitment and dedication of these fine community members should never be underestimated, and is a critical component of emergency management in our country.

I am confident all participants in the awards would join me in expressing their appreciation of the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department, in conjunction with States and Territories, sponsoring these awards.

May I also acknowledge the work of government and organisations in supporting disaster resilience through a range of strategies including supporting the work of volunteers in emergency management and building partnerships with business and community groups to improve their ability to respond to emergencies.

I commend the 14 highly commended or winners of national Australian Safer Communities Awards throughout the emergency management sector for their outstanding achievement, innovation and professional standing, and recognise the efforts of all entrants in the awards."